

643 p. 17/5)
E L V I R A:

A
T R A G E D Y.

ACTED at the
T H E A T R E R O Y A L
I N
D R U R Y - L A N E.

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. MILLAR, in the Strand.

MDCCLXIII.

THE NEW

TRUCK

AND

THE

IN

DECK

LONDON

Printed by J. Smith, in the Strand

1800

TO THE
RIGHT HONORABLE
THE
EARL of BUTE.

MY LORD,

AS the performance I here offer to the public; under the sanction of your name, bears no immediate relation to public affairs; this address is more properly to the private Nobleman than to the Minister of state. To One, who in the former character, has distinguished himself, thro' the whole course of an unblameable life, as a friend to all the liberal arts: and whose love of them has arisen from his being able to taste their genuine beauties, and to discern their real utility. The more useful have been the employment of his serious hours; the more ornamental, the amusement of his leisure: and those, who cultivated either with any degree of sufficiency, have

DEDICATION.

ever found in him a Patron as well as a Judge. I wish, for the honor of my country, that this praise were not, almost exclusively, his own.

But, while I do this scanty justice to the Man, I must appear insensible to the welfare of Britain, I had almost said to the general interests of humanity, if I omitted all mention of the Minister for services of another importance; and which have the happiness of a whole people for their aim.

The best and most amiable of Princes has ardently desired that this long and consuming tho' successful war might be terminated by such a peace, as should leave his dominions secure and great and flourishing: and to render this his paternal care of us effectual, has been the first object of your Lordship's ministry. Yet, in a government constituted as ours is, where every member of the community may freely discover his sentiments, and where a diversity of interests will set the same object in different, perhaps in contrary lights; an opposition both to ministers and measures may be the immediate consequence. Indeed, a dislike, real or pretended, of the former has ever, in the common course of things, produced opposition to

DEDICATION.

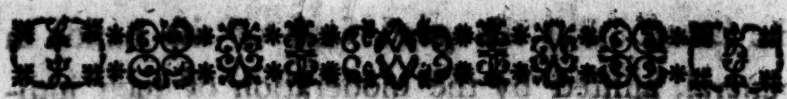
the latter. But the good sense of the nation in general, assisted by the moderation of such individuals as think largely, and embrace in one comprehensive view the present and future interests of their country, must gradually allay the heats, that never fail to arise on such occasions: And our posterity will look back, with admiration and gratitude, to the year seventeen hundred and sixty two, as to the brightest period of British glory! In the mean while, my Lord, the *mens sibi conscia recti* will be your present reward: and to certain men, for they appear among us but seldom, it is the noblest and most valuable. To such men, there is something beyond wealth and titles and power; which no popularity can give, no temporary want of it can destroy. I am, my Lord, with the highest regard,

Your Lordship's

most faithful

humble Servant,

D. MALLET.



PROLOGUE.

WAR is no more: those thunders cease to roil;
That lately shook the globe from pole to pole;
When Britain fought and triumph'd o'er her foe,
Wherever winds can waft or waters flow.
She, and she only could, bade discord cease,
And, having stumbled, gave the nations peace.
May its wish'd influence, thro' this favor'd Isle,
On every brow, in every bosom, smile!
'Twas union made her Queen of land and main:
'Tis that alone her triumphs can maintain;
Improve those blessings, arts will now adorn,
And send them safe to Britons yet unborn.

O might no other strife your hearts divide,
Than how a culprit-author should be try'd;
Ours, whom no mean, no partial interest moves,
Would be the victim of that peace he loves.
Yet, why this fear? Good nature is your boast:
And, who most want it, ever feel it most.
Abroad, you knew to conquer and to spare:
And, as your cause, your conduct too was fair.
Then, what you gave so nobly to the foe,
At home, and to a friend, you sure will show.

His scenes, to night, no feign'd adventure bring:
If tears shall flow, from real ills they spring.

What

PROLOGUE.

*What Lisbon trembling saw and truly mourn'd;
What her first Muse in epic strains adorn'd;
What Paris next bedew'd with copious tears,
Now, to the Sons of Britain, late appears.
To you, wherever Truth and nature reign,
And Terror shakes, and Pity melts the strain;
Wherever these declare the genuine bard,
Your warm applauses are his sure reward:
Then, while such Judges strike our author's view,
His fears are from himself, and not from you.*

The

The PERSONS.

Don ALONZO IV. King of PORTUGAL,	}	Mr. Garrick.
Don PEDRO, his Son,		Mr. Holland.
The QUEEN,		Mrs. Pritchard.
ALMEYDA, her Daughter, promised to Don PEDRO,	}	Miss Bride.
ELVIRA, Maid of honor to the Queen,	}	Mrs. Cibber.
Don RODRIGO, a Prince of the Blood,	}	Mr. Packer.
Don ALVAREZ, a Grandee of PORTUGAL.	}	Mr. Love.
MENDOZO,		Mr. Castle.
RAMIREZ,		Mr. Ackman.

An AMBASSADOR from the King of CASTILE.

COURTIERS, GUARDS, ATTENDANTS.

SCENE, the Palace of ALONZO.

E L V I R A:

A
T R A G E D Y.

A C T I. S C E N E I.

RODRIGO, ALVAREZ.

ALVAREZ.

H EALTH to your highness!

RODRIGO.

Brave Alvarez, welcome.

This long-expected, this auspicious morn
Will see confirm'd the league of amity
Betwixt Castile and Portugal. You time
Your wish'd arrival well; to be at once
The witness and partaker of our joy.

ALVAREZ.

My absence, and th' unceasing cares of war
On Afric's plains, against her swarthy sons,
Where, till Don Pedro, our brave prince, return'd,

B

The

The chief command was mine ; that tedious absence
Has left me ignorant, or ill-inform'd,
Of most particulars.

RODRIGO.

Then know, my Lord,
Our present queen, the mother of Almeyda,
Brought with her from Castile that blooming princess,
The wish of all beholders ! And, no doubt,
You must have often heard her lover's voice
Most lavish in the praises of the fair one,
Whom he this day espouses, and in her
Whate'er is excellent or lovely.

ALVAREZ.

Never !

Don Pedro, with that chaste reserve and caution
Which would become the coldest virgin's fear,
Even on a theme so pleasing still was silent ;
Or only, when alone, indulg'd his rapture.

RODRIGO.

So cold a lover, and so warm a hero,
Are contraries that seldom blend in youth.
'Tis most surprizing ! for, as we have heard,
His heat of valor is a rapid flame,
Encreasing as it spreads——

ALVAREZ.

And yet his prudence,
Serenely cool, keeps measure with his fire.
Had you, in this last battle with the Moors,
Had you beheld the mutual poize of each,
As either was call'd forth by fair occasion,
Your praises would be transport !—but proceed.

RODRIGO.

The sum of all is this. To-day he weds
The bright Castilian princess ; and this hour

Her

A TRAGEDY.

3

Her brother Ferdinand's ambassador
Has audience of our King——

[*Trumpet sounds.*]

ALVAREZ.

That trumpet speaks
The happy moment come. May peace, my lord,
A long, a glorious peace be the fair issue!

SCENE II.

Trumpets sound again.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN, ELVIRA,
RODRIGO, ALVAREZ, *Courtiers.*

ALONZO.

The heavens, my Queen, look smilingly upon us,
As pleas'd to see, thus solemnly secur'd,
The league that joins your Ferdinand to me
In one true bond of love——Where is my son?
Not follow us?

RODRIGO.

His modest fear avoids
To be the hearer of his own just praise.

ALONZO.

Such fear, attendant on successful arms,
Becomes the brave, and most of all in youth:
'Tis then the nobler conquest. Gentle cousin,
The ties of blood have made his glory yours:
I know they have, Rodrigo. You, Alvarez,
Were partner of his day; you nobly fought
And conquer'd with him. Both of you must share
The joy sincere that swells a father's bosom,
Made young again and blooming in a son.

B 2

SCENE

4 E L V I R A ;

SCENE III.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN, ELVIRA,
RODRIGO, ALVAREZ, *Courtier, &c.*

COURTIER.

The ambassador of Spain, my lord——

ALONZO.

'Tis well.

Conduct him hither.

SCENE IV.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN, ELVIRA,
RODRIGO, ALVAREZ.

[*The King ascends his throne, placing the Queen on his left,
the Ambassador and his train range themselves.*]

A M B A S S A D O R.

Sir, my royal master,

Don Ferdinand, by his ambassador

Thus speaks the true fraternal part he takes

In your full joy. He holds himself most happy;

That his lov'd parent shares a throne with you ;

And that his sister, his Almeyda, weds

So great a monarch's heir, and who renews

The virtues of his race. Don Pedro's fame

Spreads not o'er Portugal more welcome beams

Than o'er our friendly Spain. And you enjoy

The bliss supreme, that noblest minds taste deepest,

A son that loves the fire he emulates !

Yes, you have seen him, from his earliest youth,

Pursue the path your valour trod before

To conquest and renown. Your arm, by him,

Has oft been felt in Afric ; oft has shook

Her strongest forts, her deepest squadrons pierc'd ;

And now, even now, of laurels fairly won

A TRAGEDY.

5

A mighty harvest reap'd. Your interests, Sir,
Are link'd with ours by bonds of mutual friendship :
And where allies are mutual in their love,
The happiness is common. Our Castile,
Itself triumphant, triumphs too with you !

ALONZO.

Your sovereign is the partner of my heart.
His mother, now my queen, and who adorns
The seat she fills, has made our nations one :
And that same treaty, which declar'd her mine,
Assures Don Pedro to her daughter's arms ;
Assures my kingdom's safety : for these nuptials,
Tho by the guilt of intervening war
Too long delay'd, shall be accomplish'd now ;
While, to the holy temple, Peace and Leisure,
His best attendants, wait in Hymen's train.
Go, bear this message to my brother back ;
That all Castile may share the joy it gives.

SCENE V.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN, ELVIRA.

ALONZO.

Yes, madam, your lov'd daughter soon shall see
This happy union fix her future fate.

QUEEN.

I could have wish'd the same propitious morn,
That join'd our hands, had seen compleated too
Their plighted vows.

ALONZO.

It was my fondest aim.
But could a father's love to such a son
Deny what his impatient courage urg'd ?
Some short delay, some respite, till his arm

B 3

By

By deeds of noble daring should have earn'd
The blessing he aspir'd to.

QUEEN.

Yet, my lord——

ALONZO.

I plac'd myself the sword within his hand,
And whetted his young spirit. Fortune oft
Companions youth most willingly, and leads
The nearest road to fame. I then foresaw,
He would be all that I had been before.
I thenceforth ceas'd to conquer, but by him :
And, thanks to heaven ! his actions have outgone
A parent's warmest hope.

QUEEN.

To this my heart

Gives unrestrain'd assent.

ALONZO.

The Moors, you see,
Reduc'd to sue for mercy. Part, in chains,
His conquering arm confess, and grace his triumph :
The rest, subdu'd by his victorious name,
Lie trembling in the depth of distant desarts.
To him what glory ! what true joy to me !
I now dare hope, he may deserve to wed
The beauty he desires.

QUEEN.

Forgive me, Sir——

Have you no doubt, no foresight of resistance,
Nay of refusal, on the prince's part ?
For me, in spite of all my partial hopes,
I dread some bar, some obstacle unknown
Betwixt us and our wishes.

ALONZO.

A T R A G E D Y.

ALONZO.

Whence can rise
Suspicious so unlikely?

QUEEN.

I have mark'd,
With all a mother's watchfulness of fear,
His strange demeanor. Gloomy, lost in thought,
He sees his bride, as if he saw her not.
No beam of kindness brightens in his eye;
No word of tenderness melts from his lip;
As if nor bloom, nor grace, nor gentle spirit
Grew with her opening years.

ALONZO.

Th' alarm is vain.
Grant some indulgence to the pride of youth,
An early hero's ardor, with the blaze
Of his first conquest dazzled and engag'd.
A softer passion, doubt it not, will soon
Dispel that gaudy dream, and leave his breast
All-open to the better bliss that waits him.

QUEEN.

And yet, my busy fears still whisper to me,
Why was he absent this distinguish'd day?
Why, with his presence, deign'd he not to grace
My Ferdinand, your brother and ally,
Here in the person of his minister?
Should he resist, my Lord?

ALONZO.

Resist? Just heaven!
I shudder at the thought. In such resistance
The rebel would at once efface the son.
Ha! should he push his pride to that extreme,
More guilty as the more with glory bright,

He then should find, that conquest and renown,
That even the bonds of nature, cannot free
A subject from the laws; that all are light
As the blown bubble, weigh'd with a king's honor

QUEEN.

Sir, I would yet advise.—

ALONZO.

No: a first subject,
From whose example each descending rank
Should learn obedience, is himself most bound.
In him resistance would be deepest treason.
It cannot be, my queen: turn we our thoughts
From such forebodings of imagin'd guilt.
I will, this coming moment, to the princess
Disclose what I have fix'd. That done, the prince
Shall know my last resolve.

QUEEN.

Ah! in what words?

How will a father speak it?

ALONZO.

As his king!

SCENE VI.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA.

QUEEN.

Elvira—You have heard your queen's complaints;
Have heard too what Alonzo, fix'd as fate
And resolutely just, has now determin'd.
The fatal secret that alarms us both,
I think, is in your keeping.

ELVIRA.

Heaven! in mine?

QUEEN.

A TRAGEDY.

9

QUEEN.

In yours. Whene'er the prince vouchsafes a visit
To my poor court, his eyes are ever turn'd,
Are ever fix'd on you——What should that mean?

ELVIRA.

Your words amaze me!——

QUEEN.

Are Almeyda's charms,
Whatever Nature's kindest hand can lavish
On favor'd youth, to justify at full
A mother's fondness—tell me, are those charms
Hid but from him? while all beholders else
Divide, with mine, the transports they confess.
They see in her combin'd each brighter grace
Of look and air, see virtue's fairest stamp
Upon her brow imprest, and over all
And all exalting, modest ignorance
Of her own worth: And have I yet to fear,
For such a daughter, coldness or disdain?

ELVIRA.

How can you deem the prince so stern of nature,
That beauty has no power upon his heart?
No, Madam, he has felt it, and admires
Its awful influence in Almeyda's eyes!

QUEEN.

You know it then?

ELVIRA.

It is not mine to read
The secret of his bosom; but he oft,
With me confessing her superior charms,
And that true virtue, lovely as unfeign'd,
The beam that lights those beauties into blaze,
Has oft proclaim'd her all your fondness thinks.

QUEEN.

Q U E E N.

And sought out you, and only you, to pour
 His amorous rapture in your willing ear?
 Indeed!—Elvira—tremble! You but pull
 Destruction on your head—yes, sure destruction,
 By daring to deceive me! No: not her,
 When you are by, his theme is not Almeyda.
 Of you he talks!

E L V I R A.

Of me!

Q U E E N.

Of you alone!

You either dare to love—or, calm my fears,
 And point me to the bosom I should pierce!
 For here—I here disclose my inmost soul——
 She, the rash fair one, who should lift her eyes
 To that forbidden height; should wound my breast,
 A parent's breast, in its most tender sense,
 She, the devoted victim of my rage,
 The wretch, the vain presumer, then should feel
 How far a mother and a queen can punish!

E L V I R A.

Ye faints and angels!—Madam, let calm reason——

Q U E E N.

My daughter is to me health, pleasure, fame!
 My sum of good or ill is wrapt in her!
 Mine her affront, her rival too is mine!
 And to revenge her, earth and heaven in vain
 Would bar my way. I am on fire to know
 Where I should strike. Then—mark me—find her out,
 This guilty head—or ruin hangs o'er thine!

S C E N E

A TRAGEDY.

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SCENE VII.

ELVIRA.

What have I heard ! If my stun'd ear may credit
Her direful threats, the tempest is at hand
That must o'erwhelm us both ! And yet how firm,
Amid these horrors, would my heart be found,
If only I stood obvious to the bolt !
If all my fears were for myself alone !

SCENE VIII.

ELVIRA, DON PEDRO, RAMIREZ.

DON PEDRO.

Elvira ! my soul's happiness——

ELVIRA.

Ah ! Prince !

I have to tell—O heaven !—But look that none,
No eye may here surprize us.

DON PEDRO.

You, Ramirez,

Will watch without. Now, in the name of love,
What mean these streaming eyes ? this face o'ercast
With dark despair ? Speak, save me from my fears.
Suspence is torture !

ELVIRA.

And discovery, death !

My Lord ! my husband ! now the hour is come,
The fatal moment my sad thought presag'd !
Even at the sacred altar, when our hearts
Were wedded with our hands, even then I fear'd it—
O were the threaten'd ruin all my own !

DON

E L V I R A :

DON PEDRO.

Our fate is one ; our happiness or woe
Inseparably link'd——But whence, my love,
This deep alarm ?

E L V I R A.

Your marriage with the Princess——

O thence it springs ! Alonzo too has nam'd
Th' approaching hour to tell you, it is fix'd !
Yet more, th' offended Queen suspects our loves !
Had you beheld the rage to which her soul
Abandons all its faculties !——And now,
Made furious by despair, to what a height
Will jealousy transport her, when its eye,
In this suspected mistress, finds a wife !

DON PEDRO.

Yet, calm thy fears. Since on Don Pedro's faith
Depends the sacred charge of saving thee,
His sum of bliss ! what anger, whose revenge
Should wake such tempest in Elvira's bosom ?

E L V I R A.

Prince, judge more nobly of me. This alarm
Is all for him, whose every pain is mine.
My dangers touch me, but as your distress ;
As they must wound—for Oh too sure they will !
Thy generous breast. And it will witness for me,
The splendor of a crown, that worship'd sun
Of vulgar eyes, could never dazzle mine :
For when I dar'd, in giving you my hand,
To violate the law, the rigid law,
That makes a marriage, such as mine, rebellion ;
I came the willing victim of your love,
Resign'd, devoted to whatever fate
Heaven may reserve for either !

DON

A TRAGEDY.

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DON PEDRO.

Yes, Elvira,
Thy generous virtue was the charm supreme
That made me first, and binds me thine, for ever!

ELVIRA.

Nor do I now repent me. No, my Lord:
Even on the scaffold, at the lifted ax
My heart could smile; remembering it had once,
By being yours, brought happiness to both.

DON PEDRO.

The same bright flame, which angels might avow,
Inspires thy lover's breast—for such I am,
Such will to death be found. The name of wife,
While it refines this passion, makes it duty:
And if I needs must tremble for thy days,
All other names, however holy deem'd,
Son, subject, father, king, are light as air,
When in the ballance laid to counterpoise
Those, still more sacred, that connubial love
Has rais'd, has sanctify'd——

ELVIRA.

My soul shrinks back
With horror from these transports. O remember,
When Hymen's secret rite first join'd our hands,
Remember what my tenderness exacted,
And what your vows assur'd me—still to hold
Elvira dear; but still, as death, to shun
The crime of civil war! and O what doom,
What fate soever heaven may have in store
For her you honor'd, never to forget,
Your father is your sovereign!

DON

DON PEDRO.

By the Power,
 Whose primal law has made our being one!
 No promises shall stay a husband's arm
 From sheltering thee. There is on earth no claim,
 No tie of duty strong enough to hold
 My fierce impatience. Thou to me art all,
 Faith, virtue, honor: or these shadowy names
 All vanish at the brightness of thine eye!

E L V I R A.

My Lord, I must not hear you——

DON PEDRO.

Then——retire:
 Fly, if it must be, this tumultuous court,
 This scene of storm and danger. To the shade,
 To that sweet solitude where first our loves
 Were ratify'd and blest, where calm Content
 And true Repose have fix'd their soft abode,
 Return, Elvira: safety there awaits thee.

E L V I R A.

O dear remember'd scene! O hours of peace
 That are no more!! Beneath its pensive pines,
 And by the murmurs of its mazy stream
 That breath'd out freshness on our secret walk,
 The morn arose, the peaceful evening clos'd
 On our united hearts! All fear was far,
 All jealousy of courts; for Love himself
 Stood guardian of the shade!

DON PEDRO.

No more, no more:
 These thoughts but soothe, but soften both to weakness.
 For me, no color of delay remains.
 I know Alonzo well; his eye severe,

His

His breast inflexible : and I this hour
Must meet their utmost terror. Then the Queen—
Should her unsleeping jealousy at last
Surprize the dangerous secret of our loves,
The King, most sure, to her insulted pride,
And to the voice of Justice, would give up
Elvira's head—O fly, and guard my soul
From this distracting fear !

ELVIRA.

It must not be.

For me to fly at present would be fatal :
At once disclosing what with all our care
We should conceal. 'Tis safer to remain ;
To guide our steps with prudence, and our breasts
With firmness arm. From this alarming hour,
We meet no more—and is it I, O heaven !
Who give the hard advice ?—no more exchange
A look, a smile, where other eyes are present ;
For all around are hostile !

DON PEDRO.

Be it so.

I go resolv'd—But, O my soul's best treasure !
O'er every motion, every look and word,
Let close-ey'd Caution watch.

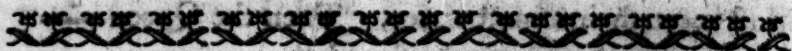
ELVIRA.

Alas, my Lord !

All that a woman's feeble reason can,
Elvira will attempt. Ye pitying powers,
Who see with what reluctance from his sight
I turn my parting steps, around his head
Spread your protecting wings ! for oh ! who knows
What can assure us, but we both receive,
And both an everlasting farewell give !

End of the first ACT.

ACT



ACT II. SCENE I.

ALONZO, ALMEYDA.

ALONZO.

NO more, Almeyda.

ALMEYDA.

Then, I hop'd in vain
To touch a King, in whom my heart reveres
A second father? Yet, a while delay
This promis'd union of your son and me,
Till he himself with fond impatience chides
The tardy hours, and presses to be mine.
It most becomes us both.

ALONZO.

It suits at least
The conscious pride that dignifies your sex.
More nicely fram'd, more delicately coy,
Than grosser man, such chaste reserve, that spreads
New brightness o'er your charms, exalts them too.
Complaint, on such a theme, would ill beseem
A virgin's mouth. I know it: and the less
You urge my promise, a King's honor given
Exacts, with stricter care, its full performance.
My orders are already sent.

ALMEYDA.

O Sir,

If my true cares, by all a daughter's duty,

T.

A T R A G E D Y.

17

To merit your esteem, can have inspir'd
Alonzo's least regard; and if amidst
A kingdom's high concerns, you deign a thought
On what may stain Almeyda's life with shame,
Or make it bright and happy! yet recall
Those orders: yet suspend——

A L O N Z O.

Your words amaze me!

I, in my turn, am left in equal doubt;
Nor know I what this strange reluctance means.
My son! Don Pedro!——is he to your thoughts
An object of such horror? Why this dread
Of calling me your father? Must I think
Contempt of him——

A L M E Y D A.

Contempt? Alas, my Lord,

Could he deserve it, did my reason judge him
Less worthy of the blood from whence he springs;
I then—O Sir!—I then might wait his pleasure,
With less emotion trembling at this heart.
To you I dare disclose its inmost weakness,
Tho shame arises blushing to forbid me——
Then know—because I love—I dread his answer!
Yes, from the moment I beheld him first,
A sudden softness, to myself unknown,
Sprung in my bosom; charm'd at once and pain'd me
With all the mingled war of love and doubt:
And gave me soon——alas! too soon to know,
Almeyda's future fate was in his power!
And——if I miss'd his heart——

C

A L O N -

ALONZO.

Proceed, fair Princess.

The blush that reddens there is Virtue's color :
 Her chaste hand spreads it. But proceed unmov'd :
 And be assur'd a parent's kindest ear
 Is open to your tale.

ALMEYDA.

I need not say

How, with his rising fame, my passion grew.
 'Twas glory fed it : and each added conquest,
 Like heaven's kind dew upon th' unfolding rose,
 Nurs'd the new blossom into strength and beauty.
 But, more unhappy as more fondly his,
 The cold that hangs on his constrain'd address
 Is winter here, and withers all my hopes !
 Hence grows, my Lord, the backwardness you blame :
 Permit it to my sex, till ripening time
 Shall warm his bosom into mutual softness.

ALONZO.

Daughter !—for that dear name is justly due
 To such exalted openness of heart,
 True Honor's fair companion—trust to me ;
 Rely on all a father's love. I feel,
 Yes, feel already every soft emotion
 These tender names convey. Let not a dream,
 A distant doubt of ills impossible
 Alarm that gentle bosom. No, Almeyda !
 When you shall learn, as instantly you may,
 Not his obedience only, but his love,
 Your fears will fly before them.

SCENE

A TRAGEDY.

19

SCENE II.

ALONZO, ALMEYDA.

GUARD.

Sir, the Prince

Attends your pleasure.

ALMEYDA.

Ah! I must be gone:

But if my tears have influence ~~on~~

ALONZO.

Go, my daughter,

And on my love repose your every care.

SCENE III.

ALONZO, DON PEDRO.

ALONZO *fits.*

My subjects, Prince, the triumphs of your sword
Have oft beheld, oft hail'd with loud applause:
Alonso too has felt a parent's share
Of joy in theirs. The time is come at last
For other festivals, the gentler triumphs
That wait on love and hymeneal rites.
These are the honors that can best reward
The warrior's glorious toils: and much it moves
My wonder, Prince, that I, who ought to find
In your impatience all a lover's ardor,
Must here advise, nay must impose, obedience!

C 2

DON

DON PEDRO.

Sir, from a father's kindness I had hop'd
 Commands less rigid, less severely urg'd :
 And that his love would in my silence read,
 What filial reverence stifles on my tongue.
 Ah, Sir ! recall this harsh command.

ALONZO.

Recall it !

By heaven ! this rude demeanour, should I give
 The rein to my just wrath, might cost thee dear——
 Nor think thy blindness to Almeyda's worth,
 This savageness of soul by love unsoften'd,
 Thy sole offence.

DON PEDRO.

Alas ! what else can stir

My sovereign's anger ?

ALONZO.

A King's word is past !

Alonzo's word and oath ! the league too seal'd
 And ratify'd, on this express condition !

DON PEDRO.

And yet, Don Pedro's heart——

ALONZO.

Ha ! canst thou dream,

The nuptials of a Prince, those general ties
 On which depend the peace and bliss of millions,
 Are bound with flowery bands, which Fancy twists
 With idle fingers ? twists for those alone,
 Th' inferior herd, who live but for themselves ?
 Far other maxims guide the royal choice,
 More noble, more exalted. Not enslav'd
 By vulgar forms, the common good decides
 A prince's fate : and, where his people's welfare
 Directs his judgment, there he gives his hand.

DON

A TRAGEDY.

27

DON PEDRO.

Then—in the dearest interest of our heart,
Its truest bliss or its severest woe,
The heart itself has no election left!
This would be binding hard, nay rivetting,
Those artificial chains, which Craft of state
First forg'd, and Vanity still deigns to wear.
Yet Nature has her claims, her elder rights,
More holy, more inviolably binding.
Are these extinguish'd only to the wretch,
Who, nearest to a throne, is most a slave?
The lowest slave——

ALONZO.

What mean'st thou? Whither tends
This raving talk?

DON PEDRO.

Yes, here the cottage-hind,
Burnt by the beam or shivering in the shade,
Smote by the fore vicissitude thro life
Of cold, heat, hunger, is a king to him,
He, with his heart, can freely give his hand;
Can chuse—Ah, Sir, you tremble with your anger—
But, at your knees, behold a son with pity!
O with a father's gracious ear receive
What now he must unfold!

ALONZO.

Thou shalt be heard.
That justice bids; by whose eternal rule
All kings should reign. Arise.

DON PEDRO.

When first the Mother
Of Ferdinand became your Queen, alas!
You deign'd not, Sir, to read my heart, or know

The springs that move it; but engag'd your faith,
And promis'd me at once to his fair Sister.

ALONZO.

True: and that promise is inviolable.
What would a king be, where the reverent awe
That makes his person sacred, should mankind
Not dare to rest their faith upon his honor?
Ask thy own bosom.

DON PEDRO.

O! I well believe,
The youth, the beauty of that charming maid
Left you no doubt of their full influence
On my touch'd heart: you could not then foresee
The bar invincible it still opposes—
I speak it with regret—to this wish'd union.

ALONZO, *rising*.

Am I awake?

DON PEDRO.

I feel, severely feel,
Fair as she is, she never can be mine.
Tho Beauty form'd her in the truest mold,
Tho Love has added to her flowering youth
Each winning grace, each air of sweet attraction;
By all unmov'd, how can I bear the thought
Of wedding her my heart can never own?
O! if my soul is precious in your sight,
If virtuous deeds, inspir'd by your example,
Have made me not unworthy to be call'd
The son of him who most adorns a throne;
To Nature's nobler law let those of state
For once give place! and save a breaking heart,
That cannot to itself be false or base,
My sire and sovereign! save it from the crime
Of disobedience!

ALON.

ALONZO.

Thou hast said; and still
 A parent's fondness here is strongly pleading
 The cause of Mercy for thee. Yet, be warn'd;
 That parent is thy king! and all his love
 Will plead in vain against the voice of duty.
 The sanctity of thrones should be preserv'd,
 Like that of altars, pure; the faith of leagues,
 Inviolatè, as Heaven's own law supreme.
 And wouldst thou, by the breach of ties like ours,
 Wouldst thou afford to Ferdinand pretence
 For kindling up, as then he fairly might,
 The flames of cruel and consuming war,
 And leave to us the deep, the long remorse
 Of shedding in a cause, unjust and base,
 The blood of thousands?

DON PEDRO.

Can Alonzo fear
 To light a fire of stubble, which his nod
 Extinguishes at once? Secure to conquer,
 Why shun to fight? The laurel in our reach,
 Why pause to make it ours? No: rather urge,
 Invite a foe, your power is sure to crush;
 And, from the wish'd occasion, add Castile
 To those late conquests that renown your arms.
 Let neighbouring nations feel, with dread and reverence,
 Th' ascendant of your genius: while your son,
 In such a shining path, shall count it glory
 With his last blood to seal a father's fame!

ALONZO.

Such talk may suit the foe of human kind,
 A hero's mouth, whose business is destruction:
 But I must act a nobler part—a King's!
 The father and preserver of his people!

We war for them alone, to make them safer
 And happier by our triumphs. Other wars,
 Of mad ambition or of blind revenge,
 But shame the prince, and curse the land he rules.
 And may the Nimrods of each blood-stain'd age,
 Th' exterminating Demons of mankind,
 Reap horror for their portion! Are we rais'd
 Alone to conquer? Are mankind but made,
 That we, as lust or fury drives our will,
 Should traffic with their blood? We are the guardians
 Of free-born men, not lords of slavish herds,
 Upon their bliss is built our truest fame:
 And when we deviate from that glorious end,
 We are not kings, but robbers, but assassins.

Keep these fair maxims ever in your eye;
 And when my death shall make this sceptre yours,
 Remember and fulfill them. Now, Don Pedro,
 My subject now, submission is thy part.
 Acquit my promise, make Almeyda thine;
 For thus, and in one word, thy king commands it.

DON PEDRO.

O hear me, and recall the stern command—
 Ah then—in one word too—for what I am
 Permits no more—I cannot.

ALONZO.

Ha!

SCENE IV.

ALONZO, DON PEDRO, *the* QUEEN,
 ELVIRA.

ALONZO.

This rebel
 Resists me to my face, and shews unveil'd

That

A TRAGEDY.

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That unsubmitting pride, which my fond love
Durst not foresee. By this determin'd insult
To your Castile, he covers me and you,
And your Almeyda, with one common shame:
And doubt I still to punish him?—But, tell me,
Say, is there not some partner of his guilt,
Some dark accomplice, whose pernicious counsel
Thus hardens him in guilt?

QUEEN.

You see her there,
Th' accomplice you would find!

ALONZO.

Elvira!

ELVIRA.

Me!

QUEEN.

Drawn from his duty by her feeble charms,
Aided, no doubt, with all th' ensnaring skill
Of female arts, to this degenerate passion
He poorly offers up Almeyda's worth,
And feeds a subject's vanity by boasting,
How rich a victim bleeds before her shrine!

ALONZO.

Amazement! Can it be?

QUEEN.

It is not now

I first discover whence his coldness grows.
Day after day have I beheld his eye
Of love and softness ever hung on hers:
Nay, when alone, when I the dreadful truth
Try'd to explore, the starting tear, that stole
Down her flush'd cheek, discover'd all I fear'd.
Even now—I scarce had reach'd my own apartment—

They

They met in secret ; and in secret long
 Conversing, parted, each with streaming eyes.
 And see, my Lord, read on their guilty cheeks
 Disorder and alarm !

ELVIRA.

I am accus'd—

But 'tis in vain—Suspensions are not proofs—
 Th' imputed crime—

DON PEDRO.

Elvira, we are born
 Above dissimulation. Yes—I love ;
 And dare, without a blush, avow my passion ;
 The object makes it glory—But, on me,
 On my devoted head fall your full vengeance :
 Elvira, Sir, is guiltless. She—

ALONZO.

Be dumb !

Ungrateful ! cruel !

ELVIRA.

Hear Elvira speak.

Make her, untry'd, unjudg'd, the sacrifice !
 If so fair peace betwixt you and the prince
 Might be restor'd, a death so justly due
 Would be my dearest wish !

ALONZO.

What ? what remains ?

Let her own chamber henceforth be her prison,
 Till she her conduct justifies at full.
 Madam, with you I trust her : be it yours
 To keep her person safe.

DON PEDRO.

Good angels guard it !

With whom, my gracious Lord—Ah ! in what hands
 Do you entrust her tender frame ?

ALON-

A TRAGEDY

27

ALONZO.

Peace! peace!

Nor farther urge my fury—I suspend
Thy fate some moments: this last day is given thee
Yet to reflect: yet to efface thy crime
By prompt obedience. Should it pass in vain—
Thou art no more my son! Away.

DON PEDRO, *aside*.

Too soon

I may return—more guilty than I go!

SCENE V.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN, ELVIRA.

ALONZO.

Thou seest, O heaven! the horrors of my lot;
That I may soon, in this offending son,
Be forc'd to punish whom I hold most dear.
Oppose not now the Monarch to the Father!
My heart would be the first: imperious duty,
Alas! may drive me to assert the King.
Then teach submission to his stubborn will,
That he may yet repent, and I be blest!

SCENE VI.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA.

QUEEN.

You see, your eyes enjoy the cruel triumph
Of our despair. But you are now my prisoner,

[*Guards enter.*]

And, with your head, shall answer what befalls!
For could your arts disarm Alonzo's wrath,

You

You never shall entreat a Mother's heart,
 By jealous honor made inexorable.
 Nay more; should I resign the loosen'd rein
 To my full rage, one victim were too few!
 The cruel Prince, who dares to stain our name
 With this disgrace, may then—The blood forsakes
 Your cheek at his imagin'd danger—Know,
 And let it shake your inmost soul! the fear
 You shew for him—but wings the fate of both!

SCENE VII.

ELVIRA.

I rise above all horrors for myself
 Of torments or of death. Don Pedro's fate,
 Inhuman queen! his fate alone can wound
 Elvira's breast: her own she scorns to feel.
 Ills, that but touch ourselves, all disappear;
 For what we love, we only know to fear!

End of the second ACT.

THE QUEEN, ELVIRA.

QUEEN.

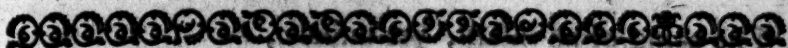
You see your eyes enjoy the cruel thing.

Of our delight. Before you now my husband.

Look on me.

And, with your head, shall answer what I say.

ACT



ACT III. SCENE I.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN.

ALONZO.

YES, let her come. The justice of a King,
That law supreme which ever ought to guide
His public will, requires she should be heard.
Her virtues too, and the fair services
To former monarchs and to me perform'd
By her forefathers, make it juster still.

QUEEN.

What would you more? Is not her guilt confess'd
In that unworthy passion she inspires?
Nor is the pride of her ambition bounded
Barely to suffer it: I know, my Lord,
That drawing glory from her conquest won,
She spares no grace, no favor, to maintain it.

ALONZO.

Such oft is woman seen: to Vanity,
To that mere idol---yet their greater god;
For Love himself holds but the second place---
Devoting even that honor they oppose
To Nature's law!

QUEEN.

And will you leave her then
To boast this triumph o'er a monarch's oath?
Leave her at large to stretch her boundless sway,
Up from your meanest subject to the throne;
Where she will reign imperious in a heart
By love enslav'd: perhaps decide the fate,

The being of an infant, yet unborn,
Who is to heir your throne !

A L O N Z O .

I hear, and weigh
What you so justly urge ! and my first thought
Was, with her death, to have atton'd her crime.
But no: that were on the wild sea of passion
To drive at random, as th' unguided bark
Is borne before the blast---She shall be heard---
Yourself shall hear her ; sound her secret aims,
And search thro all the woman in her soul.
You know my thoughts, and what I purpose for her :
Set those in open light before her eyes,
With firmness---but with temper.

S C E N E II.

Q U E E N .

Wise men tell us
That deep dissembling is th' imperial art
By which kings reign ; and that its mystic veil
Must still be drawn betwixt them and the eyes
Of their presuming subjects. Must I stoop
To this felt baseness ? Is a sovereign's will
By those to be controul'd, whom heaven ordains
The vassals of his nod ; to crouch and kiss
The foot that spurns them ? Well ; this art for once,
Descending from myself, I will essay---
Guard, call your prisoner hither---and assume,
If yet I can---for just disdain forbids it---
This gentleness of look that is prescrib'd me.

S C E N E

A TRAGEDY.

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SCENE III.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA.

QUEEN.

Draw near---Elvira.

ELVIRA.

Now assist me, heaven!

QUEEN.

Your fears, perhaps, have form'd some direful image
Of the King's wrath; some sanguinary purpose,
By which your doom already is pronounc'd.
Those fears repress, and with the calmest ear
Attentive mark me. You, beneath this roof,
Have wide-diffus'd the flames of hateful discord,
It may be, undesigning; and the crime
Your eyes have caus'd, your heart may disavow.

ELVIRA.

You judge me fairly, Madam!

QUEEN.

Yet, attend.

I dare not think you share Don Pedro's fault,
Encouraging the rebel in his breast
By favor or connivance. You too well
Must know the distance, not to be surpass'd,
Betwixt you and the throne. It is a height
A subject's eye must from afar behold,
With reverent awe, but never hope to reach!
I know you fair and virtuous: these endowments,
That now adorn you, if bestow'd aright,
May make you happy too.

ELVIRA.

What mean you, Madam?

QUEEN.

Q U E E N.

Hear what Alonzo speaks by me. He owns
 The state a debtor to your great forefathers,
 For conquests won, for blood profusely spilt,
 Not here alone in this our western world,
 But in remotest regions, where the sun
 Looks down direct at noon. He bids me dwell,
 With chief regard, on what he owes Alphonso,
 Your Grandfire, that good man who form'd his youth
 To love of virtue; whose paternal care
 Taught him, with no unequal hand, to wield
 This kingdom's sceptre.

ELVIRA, *aside*.

Whither tends her purpose?

Q U E E N.

And when a king recounts a subject's worth,
 What he has prais'd his glory bids him pay
 With ample retribution. You shall find
 He now resolves no less---Rodrigo loves you;
 Rodrigo, near of kindred to the throne.
 I know he loves you.

ELVIRA, *aside*.

I am lost for ever!

Q U E E N.

He oft has urg'd Alonzo to reward
 His ardent flame: and by a gift so noble,
 Your sovereign deems not his imperial house
 Diminish'd in its lustre. No: the world,
 By this great instance, shall be taught to know,
 He holds that man, who train'd a king to honor,
 As second only to the Prince he form'd.

ELVIRA.

I hear with wonder this exalted strain
 Of royal gratitude. Yet, Madam, think,

The

The blood, they shed for him, of right was his;
 And to have lost it, at fair honor's voice,
 Its own bright recompence! He who is call'd
 To serve his country, if he has deserv'd
 That glorious trust, is paid by serving well!
 But if, too generous, great Alonzo's bounty
 Deigns to reward their services in me,
 Tho duty has no right—

QUEEN.

You hesitate.

Speak boldly: let your amplest claim be shewn.

ELVIRA.

Then know, the sole return Elvira asks—
 Is to be mistress, of her humble fate;
 That far from courts, and to Rodrigo lost,
 She may with gentle peace live out her days!

QUEEN.

Your pride disdains him then?

ELVIRA.

Pride dwells not here:
 To such a guest this bosom is a stranger.

QUEEN.

Yet can refuse, thro mere humility,
 A prince from great Alonzo's blood deriv'd
 And dare to tell it me?

ELVIRA.

I dare to think,
 That all the brightest honors Hymen spreads;
 When he would join our hands, are airy toys,
 Or glittering load; if love attends not too,
 To plight consenting hearts.

QUEEN.

I see thro yours!
 I fathom its last depth!

D

ELVIRA.

ELVIRA. Then you may find,
What equal Nature has to all indulg'd,
Even to its poorest creatures, truth and worth;
The inmates of this heart!

QUEEN.
To boast thy virtues
Before thy queen is insult.

ELVIRA.

Madam, no—

O my full soul!—but justice done myself [* *Aside*
To you is highest reverence. Truth should ever
Be found a subject's language to the throne:
And I but meant to say, our weaker sex,
Even I, may think up to that height of honor,
Which in all ages has enobled Man;
The same blest power—

QUEEN.

'Tis well! thy soul is trac'd
Thro all its doubling mazes. Those suspicions
I fought to banish, now are truths confirm'd!
Ambitious! yes, I mark the daring height,
The wild excess, to which your pride of heart
Elates imagination! you reserve
That beauty for Don Pedro! you revolt
A prince, a son, against his king and father!

ELVIRA.

You wrong me, madam. By the faith sincere
I owe my king, this bosom never lodg'd
A thought against his dignity or peace,
And if the Prince—*I shall betray my heart— [* *Aside*
If I had power upon Don Pedro's will,
Eternal Concord with her sheltering wing,
Should ever guard the throne.

QUEEN.

A TRAGEDY.

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QUEEN.

And what is she,
Whose great ambition busys thus itself
In matters of such weight! unsummon'd too
To this high task?—Am I awake! Elvira!
What art thou?

ELVIRA.

Mock me not—A subject, madam;
A subject and your servant—yet the child
Of Reason, born to think and act with choice!
Sprung too from such a race; so great and good,
Their daughter dares not deviate into baseness,
By wedding where she loves not!

QUEEN.

I have found it!

A slave to this rebellious passion's force,
Don Pedro burns to mount a vacant throne,
That you may there be worship'd as his queen—
Ha! yet—who knows—it may, it may be true,
That, spurning all the ties of sacred law,
He is already yours! Perhaps, his fate
A secret marriage has already fix'd!
Should it be so, should he have sunk the throne
To that disgrace—the bolt is lanc'd already,
That strikes you into dust! Your grand-fire, yes,
The very man, whose loyalty I boasted,
Prescrib'd this law. Think of it well—Ah heaven!
What mingled uproar this way swells its storm?

[* A great shout is heard, and the sound of
trumpets at a distance.

D 2

SCENE

SCENE. IV.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA, MENDOZA.

QUEEN.

Mendoza ! speak.

MENDOZA.

Madam, the city swarms,
 In every freet, with multitudes enrag'd,
 Who to the palace urge their furious course.
 I came to know—

SCENE V.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA, MENDOZA.

RODRIGO:

Not here! Where is the king?

QUEEN.

Rodrigo—what !

RODRIGO.

The sum of all misfortunes !

Arms in his hands and fury in his eyes,
 Don Pedro, with a host of gather'd rebels,
 Already fills the square, and threatens loudly
 Destruction on our heads—I must return:
 The king may want our swords.

SCENE VI.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA.

QUEEN.

Perfidious ! see,

Behold the curs'd effects—

ELVIRA.

A TRAGEDY.

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ELVIRA.

O Madam, spare

This fruitless insult. Can Elvira dread
Your impotence of anger, while her fears
Embrace alike Alonzo and his son?
My bosom bleeds for both! But Oh the prince!
Whate'er his fate may be, the same despair
Abides this tortur'd heart—since I must weep
His life, or virtue, lost!

QUEEN.

And dares thy pride
Affect this glorious sorrow, when 'tis you,
You only who have plung'd him into guilt?
But yet—and let it as the knell of death
Sound in thine ear—alone he shall not fall!
The thunder o'er thy head—think of it—think
Thou art my prisoner still!

ELVIRA.

I think withall,
The death you threaten is but my enlargement
From life's low dungeon, from its galling chains,
To boundless freedom and to bliss supreme,
Reserv'd by gracious heaven for every wretch
Who suffers here unjustly!

Trumpets sound again.

SCENE VII.

The QUEEN, ELVIRA, an Officer.

QUEEN.

Ha! what means

Thy look of wild distraction?

D 3

OFFICER.

E L V I R A.

OFFICER.

Mighty Queen,

Don Pedro—

QUEEN.

What of him?

OFFICER.

Has broken down

The palace-gates ; and now is rushing forward
To where you stand—

QUEEN.

Confusion ! he is here—

SCENE VIII.

DON PEDRO, ELVIRA,

DON PEDRO, *to those behind.*

Keep clear the secret passage ; plant your friends
Thro all its downward windings to the garden ;
I follow on the instant.

Have I found thee,

My heart's sole wealth, the jewel of my bosom !
Let me secure it, let me lodge it safe
Beyond the reach of robbers.

ELVIRA.

Ah Don Pedro !

What have you done ? O you have lost for ever
A brighter gem, of dearer worth and price,
Your Faith and Innocence ! And now, your deed
Opens my eyes on mine, and sets it full
In all its horrors, all its guilt before me !

DON PEDRO.

Cruel ! what mean thy words ?

ELVIRA.

Ah me ! what means

This

A TRAGEDY.

39

This blood upon thy sword? Forbid it, Heaven!
That what my fears suggest—

DON PEDRO.

Thy fears are vain,
With care I shun'd where stern Alonzo stood,
And stem'd the tide, majestic tho' alone,
Opposing a king's firmness to it's fury.
I turn'd another way; and what you see,
These sanguine stains are from a vulgar breast,
That would have barr'd my passage on to you.
Then, let us fly, my love.

ELVIRA.

Ah, hope it not,
I dare to dye—but tremble at a crime!
I dare be deaf to love itself, and you!
Return, defend a parent and a king.
Yes, throw that rebel-sword beneath his feet;
I less shall suffer from the hand of fate,
To lose you, innocent, than save you, guilty!

DON PEDRO.

What I have done, the meanest of mankind,
The peasant, would have dar'd; have boldly met,
With face erect, earth's universal Lord,
Who from his cottage had presum'd to tear
The partner of his bosom.

ELVIRA.

By the hold,
I have upon your heart! More dear than life;
Than fame itself more sacred! yet resume
Your better thoughts. Let me behold your sorrow,
Your filial penitence—

DON PEDRO.

Ah, let me then,
Let me lodge Thee, where my distracted fondness

No more may tremble for thy life. I then
Return to beg an injur'd sovereign's mercy;
To ask it at his knees: but, while I fear
For thy dear safety, duty pleads in vain!

E L V I R A.

Then, know, Don Pedro—should this guilty passion,
Deaf to the voice of reason, take no counsel
But from its headlong fury— here I stay!
I here remain, your hostage and your victim!

D O N P E D R O.

Thou Angel-Cruelty! does then a wife
Reject her husband's aid—

S C E N E IX.

ALMEYDA, ELVIRA, DON PEDRO.

A L M E Y D A.

Don Pedro, fly!

Your life is on the cast: this minute's chance
Decides your future fate. Alonzo comes:
Those clamouring multitudes, at sight of him,
Shrunk into tame submission. Not their boldest
Could bear the mingled dignity and wrath
That threaten'd from his brow. Be gone, my Lord,
Let not a father's vengeance find you here.

E L V I R A.

O unexampled goodness!

D O N P E D R O.

Can it be?

Do you take part, Almeyda, for his life,
The life of One, who merits all your hate!

A L M E Y D A.

Ah no! The jealousy of slighted love
I stifle here. My soul is rais'd beyond

The

A TRAGEDY.

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The baseness of revenge. I pardon all,
So you are safe. Fly then, this instant fly,
Even were it with my rival—

ELVIRA.

See! Don Pedro,
The King appears—

SCENE X.

ALONZO, DON PEDRO, ALMEYDA,
ELVIRA.

ALONZO.

Yes, thou of many crimes!
Thou complicated traitor! thou art lost,
Where mercy cannot find thee—But behold,
Lo where he stands! Say, is thine arm still rais'd,
Still eager for the sin of parricide?
This instant yield thy sword; or plunge it here
Full in a father's breast.

DON PEDRO.

That word, my Lord,
That dreadful sound has wrench'd it from my hand.
One moment's madness has not so effac'd
Great Nature's law, that I should ballance here.
And now, disarm'd, I know my ruin sure!
My doom already past! But O, my Lord,
O let impartial Justice draw her line,
And separate strictly innocence from guilt!

ALONZO.

Ha! innocence?

DON PEDRO.

Elvira's safety, Sir,
Unsheath'd my sword. I thought her life in danger:
And to secure my bliss in guarding that,

Tempestuous

Tempestuous passion bore me into guilt.
 But her firm virtue, firm above all fear,
 Deny'd to be th' accomplice of my crime.
 She chose to stay, and answer with her life
 For my returning reason. Save such goodness :
 Protect it, Sir, from one revengeful-arm.
 I ask no more,

A L O N Z O.

Far other cares should now
 Employ thy thoughts. To serve her better, know
 Thou shouldst defend her less. 'Tis thine to tremble
 For her and for thyself !

D O N P E D R O.

If I must dye,
 Let Punishment at once lift up her axe,
 And strike this rebel : for, while life is mine,
 That life, in her defence, will be employ'd,
 You think this recent tumult quench'd and dead ;
 An instant blows it into sevenfold flame.
 Your subjects then, let loose from all regards,
 May force my prison-doors, may set me free :
 And I, amidst the horrors of my rage,
 May to its deep foundations shake this realm !
 Do things that reason shudders but to think !
 In that wild storm, discerning, sparing none,
 Noble or base, but you and this fair princess !

E L V I R A.

His passion blinds him ! All the guilt is mine,
 Who thus have arm'd a son against his sovereign,
 Then let my head atone it ; let my death
 Restore that peace—

A L O N Z O.

Who waits ?—Confine the Prince
 To his apartment.—
 [Guards enter,

ALMEYDA

A TRAGEDY.

43

ALMEYDA.

Dear unhappy youth!

ALONZO.

And guard him at the peril of your Heads.

[Two conduct Don Pedro to his Apartment.

Secure Elvira too.

[She is attended to hers by two others.

Stern Justice—no,

I have no son! I am no more a father!

Follow me not *—I would avoid myself, [* *To Almeyda.*

Fly from mankind, forsake this hated light,

And hide my woes in death's eternal night!

End of the third ACT.

ACT



ACT IV. SCENE I.

RODRIGO, ALVAREZ.

Y O U seem much mov'd.

RODRIGO.

The horrid vision still
Pursues my wounded fancy !

ALVAREZ.

Speak, my Lord,

What have you seen ?

RODRIGO.

I am not prone to shape
Unreal forms, with Superstition's eye :
But thus it was. There, in that reverend pile
Where rest the bones of our departed kings,
And where in animated marble rise
Their sceptred forms around ; as on my knees
I pour'd to heaven my heart in secret prayer,
At once a more than midnight-darkness spread
O'er all the solemn scene : at once was heard
A peal of groans, resounding from below !
While sudden lightnings, darted thro' the gloom,
Shew'd every sanguine statue red with blood !
Chief that of old Alphonso—you have seen him,
Elvira's grandfire.

ALVAREZ.

Yes : to crown whose virtues,
The reigning Monarch plac'd his honor'd form
Next those of our dead kings.

A TRAGEDY.

45

RODRIGO.

The very same.

Down his stain'd armor ran the crimson drops,
And his shook image trembled on its base!
Now, if I live, I saw it.

ALVAREZ.

That good angel,

Who watches o'er our state, avert the dangers
Such omens may foreflew—The King! he gnaws
His angry lip, and storm is on his brow.

SCENE II.

ALONZO, RODRIGO, ALVAREZ.

ALONZO.

Then—it is fix'd—The Lords that you have summon'd,
Say, are they come?

ALVAREZ.

They wait your pleasure, Sir,

In the near council-chamber—

ALONZO. *Aside.*

Could they see

Their sovereign's breast unveil'd! but no: the curtain
Must be close-drawn, that each man may advise
As unimpassion'd reason guides him—Leave me.

SCENE III.

ALONZO.

Advise!—Thou general Parent of mankind!
Who bidst thy sun arise, thy rain descend
On all the various creatures thou hast made,
Just and unjust alike! is one sad father
Reserved, in his grey years, himself to punish
A lov'd, an only son? And must he sit
In judgment on him? hear the doom of death—

My

My soul revolts, all nature in my bosom
 Shrinks and starts back from this detested duty;
 But 'tis a King's—and thou, Alonzo, thou
 Art he, that king! O did the beggar know
 What splendid misery is lodg'd within
 The circle of a crown, he would not stoop
 His palsy'd hand to take it from the dust,
 And be its wearer—What, or how determine?
 Was it for this I weary'd heaven with vows
 To give my throne an heir? Was it in wrath,
 Heaven granted my request? and have I form'd
 His youth to glory; seen his steps outrun
 The swiftest in her race, that he, this son,
 With her fresh laurel wreath'd, should bleed at last
 Beneath the murderous axe?

Guards—bring my son;

Conduct Don Pedro hither.

Once, once more

I mean to hear him—could I pardon too,
 I yet were blest! for my torn bosom feels
 The pangs of guilt, in following Virtue's call.
 Then summon all the monarch to thine aid!
 For think, the present, think, each future age
 Will fix their eyes of censure or applause
 On this one act of thine. Altho a father,
 That private name must bend before the large,
 The universal duties of a sovereign.
 Quit we the sceptre, or its rights assert;
 Chastise offence, while weeping o'er th' offender;
 That humankind may tremble to transgress,
 Who see inexorable Justice stretch,
 O'er all alike, her rod of punishment;
 Not even a prince, a throne's immediate heir
 Exempted from her arm!

A TRAGEDY.

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SCENE IV.

ALONZO, DON PEDRO.

ALONZO.

The council, Prince,
Is now assembling. Your own breast must tell you
Th' inevitable sentence it will pass :
And when your fury plung'd you into guilt,
You on yourself pronounc'd it. Yet there is,
There still remains one door of mercy open :
Take warning then in time. Your prompt obedience,
To me a son, to you restores a father.
Fulfill the treaty, wed that virtuous Princess :
You live on these conditions. These refus'd—
I may be wretched—but your doom is past !

DON PEDRO.

Then—know your Son, with all his failings on him.
My Soul, like yours, thus guilty as I am,
Beholds, unmov'd, the nearest face of danger :
And you would blush, would deeply blush for both,
If fear or force debas'd me to submission.
What love and reverence, to a parent due,
Could not persuade, no tortures can obtain.

ALONZO.

Thou Cruel ! why, deserving all my hate,
Preserve this greatness, that but more embitters
The grief I feel already ? Shew me rather
A mortal enemy, a Son ingrate
Prepar'd to strike his parricidal knife
Deep thro my heart. Reduc'd to wish thy death,
Let me behold it too—without despair !

DON PEDRO.

I have deserv'd to die.

ALONZO.

My pity still
Would bid thee live.

DON PEDRO.

What must I do !

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Obey!

DON PEDRO.

Then all is o'er. It cannot be.

ALONZO.

Retire—

A tear would follow—but I blot it out.

SCENE V.

*The back scene opens and discovers the Lords of the council met, RODRIGO, ALVAREZ, and others.**The King walks slowly up to his chair of State.*

ALONZO.

Be seated, Lords—Alas! I look around,
 And read on every face the secret pangs
 Your bosoms share with mine. The ready drop
 Stands trembling in each eye, as if yourselves
 Had each a son to judge and to condemn!
 But let us rise above all private feelings;
 Remorse should have no place, where Justice reigns;
 And those, whom heaven appoints to counsel kings,
 Must shed no tear, but for offended laws.
 All other grief is weakness, or is guilt.

The Prince, a rebel to the law and us,
 Has set at nought the binding faith of oaths;
 The solemn ties of treaties ratify'd,
 Whatever links one nation to another,
 And king to king. Nor is this all. You saw,
 With horror and astonishment you saw him,
 In arms and at the head of traitors arm'd,
 Assault this palace! force its gates against me!
 And, if he shun'd himself the guilt supreme
 Of parricide, he left his king expos'd,
 His father at the mercy of those rebels
 Whom he had made so!—These are his offences.

Tis

'Tis yours to judge them, and pronounce his doom.
Rodrigo, speak.

RODRIGO.

Alas ! I should be silent.

You know, and have approv'd the tender love
I bear Elvira. To my happiness
Don Pedro is the sole, the fatal bar :
And you command me, Sir, to judge a rival !
But far be from me each imagin'd hope,
However dear, that but respects myself !
Is it a question, can it bear debate,
If he, tho deem'd a criminal, should live ?
Search your own breast : the powerful pleadings there
Will best inform you what I should advise.
Forgive, my Lord, this transport.

ALONZO.

Let calm reason

Guide all you say. Proceed.

RODRIGO.

I ask again,

Is it in question, whether your renown
Should live by him, or be for ever lost ?
He—and there is none other—can support
The sceptre's weight ; he only, after you,
Preserve this kingdom flourishing and happy.
Weigh then, with candor weigh, against his crime,
Th' acknowledg'd prize of benefits like these.

ALONZO.

But treaties seal'd, and sanctify'd by oaths,
He dares to violate.

RODRIGO.

Are treaties then,
But leagues of regal cruelty and force ?
Must you, to please a neighbouring monarch's pride,

E

In

In your own son exterminate your race ?
 Extinguish every future hope ? and would not
 The cheek of Ferdinand burn red with shame,
 Should his lov'd sister owe a husband's hand
 To cold obedience ; while, in other realms,
 New thrones, new hearts, attend the fair one's choice ?

He forc'd the palace-gates. The crime is own'd :
 But no design against your crown or person
 Urg'd that blind violence. Alas ! his aim
 Was but to screen th' endanger'd life of one,
 His fondness trembled for. You see him thus—
 A rebel ? no : a lover in despair !
 And can a moment's rashness merit death ?
 No : let him live—and tho my bosom bleeds
 At what I utter—yes, indulge his love !
 His life is all : a life like mine is nothing !

A L O N Z O.

You prove the blood you spring from : and this effort,
 This generous violence you do your heart,
 While it misleads, both honors and exalts you.
 But 'tis the hero, not the judge has spoken,
 What says Alvarez ?

A L V A R E Z.

Could your eye, my Lord,
 Pierce inward to my heart, the conflict there,
 The war that gratitude and duty wage,
 Would leave it doubtful which you most should pity,
 Don Pedro or his judge. He sav'd my life.
 Beneath an African's uplifted sabre,
 Faint, bleeding thro my former wounds, I lay.
 He saw, he flew, and on his shield receiv'd
 Th' impending sword ! Was it, good heaven, for this,
 That I, who but for his protecting arm
 Had now been dust, should sit to judge his fate ?
 Ah no, my Lord : I would be dumb for ever !

A L O N Z O.

A TRAGEDY.

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ALONZO.

Fair honor and the duty of this place
Exact it of you ; call on you to speak
By truth's unbias'd dictates. This great cause
Imports ourself, our realm, and all mankind.

ALVAREZ.

Alas, my Lord, to what alternate horror,
As subject and as man, am I expos'd ?
But hence all private ties, the first and dearest !
My life is his ; my duty, Sir, is yours :
And from the fear, so busy here within,
Of being deem'd ungrateful to a friend,
I dare not be a traitor to my king.

The law *has* spoke. His sentence *is* pronounc'd,
Is past already ; in despite of tears,
Of all the pain'd reluctance-pity strives with :
For when the sovereign majesty of kings
Is once invaded, but one way remains
To expiate that offence. Th' insulted rights,
You sit to judge of, are not yours. They grow
Inherent to the throne : And you, my Lord,
Are to all present, all succeeding princes
Accountable for what you now decree.
I go too far.

ALONZO.

Proceed.

ALVAREZ.

It cannot be :

Tears choak my voice.

ALONZO.

Keep nothing from my view :
Thy virtue here demands it.

ALVAREZ.

I obey.

Should pity now prevail in his behalf,
You are no more a king ! You reign at mercy

Of winds and seas in his ungovern'd passions !
 Your subjects too, the rebels of to-day,
 Who now will think him formidably theirs,
 Are from this moment his. A nod from him
 Will be their law ; and each licentious hour
 Wear its red mark of civil broils and murders :
 The crown, the sceptre may remain with you,
 The power, that should sustain them, will be his !

A L O N Z O.

Heroic proof of loyalty and truth !
 I can discern the painful throes of soul.
 This firmness costs thee : but its felt ascendant,
 The sovereign influence of such virtue, chides
 Fond nature from my bosom. Now, who else
 Among you, Lords, stands forth to give his suffrage ?—
 What ! no one rise ?—Alas ! the tears that stream
 From each dejected eye, this mournful silence,
 Big with all horror, but too clearly speak,
 What you have judg'd—My son is then condemn'd !
 For you, for all my people, for mankind,
 I here devote him—Were I but a father,
 He still might live—A monarch must be just :
 Who has betray'd the law would be a tyrant !
 He shall not reign : No, from that threaten'd danger
 I now deliver you, your wives, and children.
 Let all retire : and you, Mendoza, go,
 Inform him of his fate—

S C E N E V.

A L O N Z O.

What will be mine ?

O tyrant-Duty ! art thou satisfy'd,
 While I with Roman names of cruel greatness,
 With Brutus, Manlius, share the same abhorr'd
 Of being more, or less, than man was meant ?

But how ? or when ?—The blackest hour of night
Must cover this dire deed—Ha ! there, behold
Th' uplifted axe ! Ha heaven ! it falls—and lo
A headless trunk ! a scaffold red with blood !
O thou, All-Just, who doom'd me to a throne !
Why, with its duties, leave this writhing bosom
Accessible to pangs, that but a Child
Can pierce the soul with—and a Parent know ?

SCENE VI.

ALONZO, *the* QUEEN, ALMEYDA.

ALMEYDA.

What have I heard ? This most inhuman sentence
Is it then past ? Each face bedew'd with tears,
And every eye cast in despair on heaven,
I saw the Council part : and on your brow
I read my fate in characters of horror !
You have condemn'd your son !

ALONZO.

I have done justice,

ALMEYDA.

O heaven ! can you avow, and can I hear it ?

QUEEN.

This wound, my Lord, must in a father's heart
Be deeply felt. Why, by his guilty rashness,
Why has Don Pedro push'd you to the brink
Of dire necessity—

ALONZO.

Madam, no more,

If in obedience to relentless duty,
If deaf to all that bleeding Love can plead
In this sad bosom, I condemn a son;
'Tis yours to think, that mercy was his due.
Unhappy boy ! alas it is too plain,
He has no mother.

E L V I R A :

SCENE VII.

The QUEEN, ALMEYDA.

ALMEYDA.

If my life is dear
To her who gave it, seize, O seize, this moment—
You see Alonzo softening into nature—
Kneel, press, adjure him—and you save the prince !

QUEEN.

I go. Your pains and pleasures all are mine :
Be most assur'd they are—And, tho' the skies
Look frowning round us, yet methinks a beam
Of day-light breaks upon the doubtful horror !
It lights me—yes, it points the secret path,
I should pursue ! Almeyda—trust to me,

SCENE VIII.

ALMEYDA.

Sir, bring your prisoner : by the Queen's command
I have to talk with her.

[Guard goes out,

It must be so—

Yes, to preserve him, I will stoop to beg
A rival's aid. Even should he live for her ;
Is any price too high, at which we save
The life of him we love ? She comes—

SCENE IX.

ALMEYDA, ELVIRA,

ALMEYDA.

Alas !

Don Pedro is found guilty !

ELVIRA.

O despair !

O death to all my hopes !

ALMEYDA

ALMEYDA.

Elvira, now,
On this important, this deciding moment
Our mutual fate depends. You long have mark'd
My passion for the prince; that, in despite
Of scorn in him, of jealousy in me,
Beyond whatever nature else can boast
I hold him dear—

ELVIRA.

I have with heart-felt grief,
And flowing eyes beheld it—and even now
They stream afresh!

ALMEYDA.

The Queen is gone to try
Her tenderest influence on a husband's heart,
I too will clasp his knees, and beg for mercy:
But will these arts, these little aids prevail
Against his dread severity of nature?
If you have thought, or if inventive Love
Can prompt your breast with more successful means,
Advise, Elvira; for your counsels here
Shall be my law. Whatever you suggest,
At peril of my life I will perform,

ELVIRA.

Ah! how reply? What equal answer find
To such exalted worth? All that my thought
Is big with, your true virtue, my distress,
All press me with confusion. In your sight
The Prince must seem ungrateful and unjust;
And I a worthless rival, cast beneath
Your least regard.

ALMEYDA.

Let virtue make us equal,
The Prince to both is dear: let both unite,
Without a farther thought, to save his life.

E L V I R A.

O amiable goodness ! Wonder fills
 And joy again attempts to chear my bosom !
 There rises to my eye one glimpse of light,
 One ray of hope ; but you, and only you
 Can make it real. Closely here confin'd,
 Alas ! I have no means—Go then—and heaven
 Succeed your purpose ! from the King intreat,
 Obtain a moment's audience for Elvira—
 I yet may calm his anger ; yet prolong
 Don Pedro's threaten'd days—perhaps for you !

A L M E Y D A.

It would be cruel, as 'tis most unjust,
 To think such hopes could animate my zeal.
 Elvira, no ; the fire that warms this breast
 Is of a purer beam. I go to find
 Th' unhappy King ; with prayers and tears to try
 If he is yet a parent, or a man !

E L V I R A.

O may the fair attempt successful prove !
 May stern Alonzo hear the voice of love !
 O may we both preserve, what both adore !
 So he but lives—I ask of heaven no more !

The guards conduct her back,

End of the fourth ACT.

A L M E Y D A.



ACT V. SCENE I.

MENDOZA, RAMIREZ,

RAMIREZ.

Condemn'd to die, you say?

MENDOZA.

This very moment

The fatal preparations are begun;

The gloomy pomp that shews us death more dreadful!

Surrounding guards, whose silence terrifies

Beyond the din of their conflicting arms;

The bloody theatre, with cypress hung —

Alas! the color that ten thousand mourners

Must shortly wear—And then the victim comes!

'Tis horrible to thought!

RAMIREZ.

Who has in charge

To see this murder done?

MENDOZA.

On me, my friend,

On me the cruel duty is impos'd

By our relentless Master,

RAMIREZ.

Is the hour

Appointed, and the place?

MENDOZA.

Both, both are fix'd;

And when the midnight-bell with mournful call

Tolls up the cloister'd Fathers of Saint Francis,

Who have been nam'd on his departing soul

To beg heaven's mercy—when that fatal warning
Has struck my ear, Don Pedro is brought forth.

RAMIREZ.

And whither then?

MENDOZA.

To that sequester'd spot,
Wall'd high around, where oft the noblest blood
Of Portugal has flow'd. 'Tis there the Prince
Must lose his head.

RAMIREZ.

Mine shall be risk'd, by heaven!
Nor mine alone: a thousand more shall fall,
Ere that inhuman sentence takes effect.
A deed like this will stain our hated annals
Thro all descending time. Let us prevent it.
The people, still tumultuous, like their sea,
May soon be blown into a second storm,
It shall be try'd.

MENDOZA.

You cast yourself away,
And serve not him your friendship aims to save.
The palace-gates are strongly barr'd; at each
A triple guard is planted: and the King
Commands, on pain of death, that none approach him.

RAMIREZ.

But sure these orders are not for the Queen;
And she, a woman, by those tender feelings,
That are her sex's glory, must be sway'd—
She moves this way, and with her, fair Almeyda,

SCENE II.

The QUEEN, ALMEYDA, MENDOZA,

RAMIREZ.

O Queen! and you, lov'd Princess! hear me speak—

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

Withdraw at once.

RAMIREZ.

Don Pedro, gracious Mistress—

QUEEN.

Ha!—leave us—go.

RAMIREZ.

Heaven! in her latestt hour,
When she would plead to thee, remember this!

SCENE III.

The QUEEN, ALMEYDA.

QUEEN.

Elvira see the King! What hast thou done?
Dishonor'd as we are, you seem to dread
The vengeance due to your disgrace and mine.
Far from resenting these repeated insults,
You, by your tears, solícite new and greater;
For they may live, the hated pair may live
To see our mutual shame, and triumph o'er it!

ALMEYDA.

Let not the pious meltings of compassion
Offend you, Madam. Let her virtue still
Be your Almeyda's happiness and pride.

QUEEN.

What is your aim? what visionary purpose
Deceives you into wishing they may meet?
'Tis madness all.

ALMEYDA.

When Lisbon first beheld
It blest your daughter's steps. As Peace and Ease
Came, her companions, shouting thousands rais'd
Her name to heaven, and hail'd their guardian-genius.
But what a peace, good Angels? writ in blood,

And

And seal'd with murder ! Was I then but meant
 The Messenger of heaven's severest vengeance ?
 To tear asunder nature's closest ties ;
 And by the Sire assassinate the Son ?
 'Tis more than horror ! May Elvira's tears
 Prevent these threaten'd mischiefs—

QUEEN.

May the rage,
 This bosom swells with, rather be asswag'd
 By seeing both expire ! Rejected ? heaven !
 The daughter of a king ! in whose high veins
 Flows undebas'd from a long line of heroes
 The noblest blood ! Shall Europe hear it told,
 She has been set at nought ? Ha !—and for whom ?
 Degenerate boy ! I, with my own, could purchase
 His death, this moment !

ALMEYDA.

Do you then wish mine ?

QUEEN.

Ah, can't thou love him still ?

ALMEYDA.

I still adore him,
 Ungrateful, cruel as he is !

QUEEN.

O shame !
 O fall ignoble from the high rais'd sense
 Of that resentment, wrongs like ours demand,
 Nay sanctify, and make our vengeance, virtue !
 Can she, a child of mine, whose every pulse
 Should beat with driving fury and disdain,
 Whose bosom should expand to take in all
 That brave revenge avows, thus melt away
 In tears and sighs ? like some fond village-maid

Beneath

A TRAGEDY:

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Beneath her willow, by the brook obscure
That soothes her amorous folly?

ALMEYDA.

O yet think,

There is revenge more noble, more divine,
That spreads no blush upon the injur'd cheek,
By rendering good for ill.

QUEEN.

My Ferdinand!

Son of thy mother's soul, when thou shalt know
Thy sister's abject spirit, thus resign'd
To injuries and scorn, thy breast will flame
With anger uncontroll'd! On thee alone
My hopes, my life depend—Who waits?—'Tis glory
To fall reveng'd.

GUARD.

Your pleasure, Madam?

QUEEN.

Go,

Call in th' Ambassador of Spain.

ALMEYDA.

Ah me,

Whence this new storm of passion?

Enter AMBASSADOR.

QUEEN.

You have had

Your audience. Then be gone; this moment go;
On all the wings of haste to Spain return:
And there, this letter, as you prize your head,
Deliver on the instant to my son.
Yet, stay—You may be useful, and inforce
With your best reason what my letter urges;

That

That he should arm incessantly, and lead
 His troops the nearest road towards hated Lisbon.
 Extreamest need, mine and Almeyda's safety,
 Requires he should. That writing will explain
 What else remains.

Exit Ambassador.

My brain turns round—Ascend
 From night eternal and profoundest hell,
 Ye Powers of vengeance ! Punish home with me
 This object of my hate ! thro all her frame
 Spread fires unquench'd ! then, with his funeral torch,
 Let Death attend, to light her bridal bed !
 And thus compleat my great revenge, as fits
 A mother and a Queen !

SCENE IV.

ALMEDYA.

My blood stops short
 And freezes in its course to hear her threats.
 But love and rage distract her.

SCENE V.

ALONZO, ALMEYDA.

ALONZO.

Princess, yes,
 Your tears have vanquish'd. I will hear Elvira :
 But be most sure her hopes are empty air.
 Leave me : she comes.

SCENE

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ALONZO, ELVIRA.

This moment, Sir,

ALONZO.

Do what you have in charge.

Speed wing thy steps !

ALONZO.

ELVIRA.

But then—'tis still the first, the law supreme,
On kings most binding, to be just in all.
Guilt may appear, where yet no crime is found ;

A rebel,

A rebel, an ingrate, deserves to die.
And yet these names may not belong to him,
To your unhappy Son.

A L O N Z O.

Thy words are wild !
Despair and love thy reason have unsettled.

E L V I R A.

Ah no—If he, against the faith of treaties,
Refus'd Almeyda's hand, it was not, Sir—
Believe these tears—'twas not the crime suppos'd
Of disobedience—

A L O N Z O.

How !

E L V I R A.

And if he forc'd
These palace-gates, his noble soul abhorr'd
All criminal attempt against his king.
A word, a breath his innocence had prov'd !
But he, a hero in his cruel silence,
To save Elvira, greatly chose to die !
'Tis therefore mine, the sole remaining purpose
Of my last hour, to clear his injur'd name ;
And lead you into truth. Don Pedro's faults
Were those of duty, Sir—He is my husband !

A L O N Z O.

Ha ! husband ! he ! my son !—And dares thy fondness
Think, by discovery of this daring crime,
To move compassion ? When no hope remains
Of grace to his offence, dost thou presume
On mercy for thy own acknowledg'd guilt ?

E L V I R A.

I ask for none ! my parting thoughts are fix'd
On something nobler, dearer far than life.

The

The rigid law, by you declar'd inviolable,
I only have transgress'd—

ALONZO.

True : and thy life

The penalty shall pay.

ELVIRA.

It is most just.

I bring no plea, I urge no vain defence,
That love for him—such love as would in heaven
Be held no crime—

ALONZO.

Away—that very love

Makes thee but still more guilty !

ELVIRA.

Sir, recall

The dreadful moment, when your court beheld
This Son, this blooming promise of a hero,
His eye extinguish'd and his fading cheek
Of its fresh rose forsaken, to the grave
Untimely sinking ! and a father's tears
In hopeless silence streaming o'er his face !
I urge it not, that, to preserve his youth,
And save your only hope, I gave my hand
Where I had vow'd my heart—I urge not this :
But now at last devote myself for both !
In death exulting to have sav'd him twice !

ALONZO.

Thro all the horrors guilt has thrown around thee,
Thy virtue yet looks lovely—but in vain :
Thy crime and his stand manifest to view,
And what the laws exact shall be fulfill'd.

F

ELVIRA.

E L V I R A.

Just heaven! shouldst thou, when kings address thy throne
 For mercy on their own offences, then
 Be deaf to them, as he is now to me—
 But on, my Lord; pursue these savage-maxims;
 Without remorse consummate your revenge!
 Yet, other victims, other heads attend,
 To satiate its full fury—See, O King!
 Lo! where they stand—

*[Her two children are brought in
 by their Governess.]*

Acknowledge them for yours,
 By dooming both to bleed!

A L O N Z O.

Ye holy Powers!

What do I see?

E L V I R A.

Yes, by one common fate,
 Wife, children, husband—let us perish all!

A L O N Z O.

What say'st thou!—Justice! Mercy! how ye rend
 My heart!

E L V I R A.

Forgive the language of despair.
 My children, kneel with me. Your infant-tears
 May wake at last the parent in his breast.
 Sir, they are yours—behold them not as mine.
 The law demands a victim: here, on me
 Exhaust its utmost rage—but O, to these
 A father save, and to yourself a son!
 Yet some few moments from his ear conceal
 Elvira's death—for should it reach him now,
 His own too sure would follow—

A L O N Z O.

ALONZO.

Call my son !

Fly, let him know—Elvira is his own !

My daughter—

ELVIRA.

O unutterable Joy !

Here at your feet, to heaven and you I pour

My grateful bosom—

ALONZO.

Nature ! thou hast conquer'd.

I am a man, a father !—Rise, Elvira ;

Live, and be happy long—O my dear children !

Take, take me all—

SCENE VII.

ALONZO, ELVIRA, DON PEDRO.

ALONZO.

My son !

DON PEDRO.

My King and father !

Elvira—from the grave to me restor'd !

To these despairing arms !—and you my little ones !

ELVIRA.

O I am blest—beyond all utterance blest !

And my transported heart—Ah me—

ALONZO.

Elvira !

Thy cheek is pale !

ELVIRA.

Oh I have death within me !

DON

DON PEDRO.

This flood of Joy, my soul's best happiness,
O'erpowers thy tender frame.

E L V I R A.

Ah no, I burn :

A kindled furnace rages in my bosom—
Convulsions shake me—sweats of death bedew
My trembling limbs !

DON PEDRO.

O Source of life I look down

With pity on her—

E L V I R A.

Ha ! a sudden night

Spreads dark around—You swim before my eyes—
Their light is lost !—but I will hold you fast—
Again I burn !

A L O N Z O.

O most inhuman Queen !

This Stygian draught, too sure, was by thy hand,
Thy fatal hand prepar'd.

DON PEDRO.

Did heaven look on

And suffer this ?—Yet, by my soul's strong anguish !
Not she alone, her Spain shall weep in blood
This deed accurst !

E L V I R A.

'Tis past—Don Pedro, love

My memory—Alonzo, cherish these—
O my poor babes !—and bless their dying mother !
But that fair princess—yes, reward for me
Her nobleness of virtue—My lov'd Lord !
These arms would fold thee still—but Oh—

A L O N Z O.

A TRAGEDY. 69

ALONZO.

She dies—

In that last sigh the gentle spirit fled !

DON PEDRO.

Mine shall rejoin it, ere it finds that heaven

Prepar'd for souls like hers—I will not live ?

This sword restor'd—

ALONZO, *seizing his hand.*

Away—Shall fury still

Sway all thy actions ? No : reward her truth

A nobler way. These Infants claim thy care :

And thou must suffer life, to guide their steps

Safe from the snares that courtly Fraud and Falsehood

Spread daily in a youthful Prince's walk ;

Spread for his ruin. And now, warn'd thyself,

Let all mankind, by one example, know,

From passions unrestrain'd what mischiefs grow !

THE END.

P O S T S C R I P T.

HAVING found by frequent experience, how much the mind is apt to flag under the same kind of employment, too long and too uniformly continued; I had an inclination to try whether a different sort of labor might not be, at the same time, a sort of relief. To this experiment only, the reader is indebted for the pleasure, or distaste of the preceding poem. The melancholy event, on which it is built, has a foundation of truth in history; and was celebrated long ago by the famous Portuguese poet, CAMOËNS, in his *Lusiad*. There he has described at large, and with all the graces of his poetry, the beauty, the virtue, and the tragical fate of that lady, to whom I have here given the name of Elvira. Don Pedro, to whom she had been privately married while she lived in a pleasing solitude on the banks of the Mondego, was long happy in her truth and tenderness. After her death, when he became king of Portugal, he had her skeleton taken out of the coffin, placed on a magnificent throne, solemnly crowned and acknowledged for his queen. It is reported, that he obliged the principal persons of his court to kiss the bones of those hands which had once been the object of his love and fondness. But it is true, that he ordered such of her enemies, as fell into his power, to be punished with circumstances of great severity. They were burnt alive.

A writer of distinguished reputation, who found the subject extremely fit for a tragedy, brought it on the French theatre, with great and universal applause. The reader, who cares to give himself that trouble, will easily discover how much, and how generally I have followed my original: and he only has a right to determine, whether I have done it well or ill. If he is acquainted likewise with the history of our stage, he must have remarked, that it was no unfrequent practice among our poets, especially during the last part of the former century; first to borrow very freely from our neighbours on the continent; and then, in their prefaces, to boast how much they had excelled their benefactors. But surely the practice is too unfair to be justified, and too illiberal to be copied. Let the reputation therefore of Monsieur de la Motte remain entire and inviolate.

EPILOGUE.

By Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs. CIBBER.

LADIES and Gentlemen—'Tis so ill bred—
We have no Epilogue, because I'm dead;
For he, our Bard, with frenzy-rolling eye,
Swears you shan't laugh, when he has made you cry.

At which I gave his sleeve a gentle pull,
Suppose they should not cry, and should be dull:

In such a case, 'twould surely do no harm,

A little lively nonsense taken warm:

On critick stomachs delicate and queasy,

'Twill ev'n make a heavy meal sit easy.

The town hates Epilogues—it is not true,

I answer'd that for you—and you—and you—

(To pit, boxes, and 1st gallery.)

They call for Epilogues, and Hornpipes too—

(To the upper gallery.)

Madam, the Criticks say—To you they're civil,

Here if they have'em not, they'll play the devil;

Out of this house, Sir, and to you alone,

They'll smile, cry Bravo! Charming!—Here they groan:

A single critick will not frown, look big,

Harmless and pliant as a single twig,

But crouded here they change, and 'tis not odd,

For twigs, when bundled up, become a rod.

Criticks to bards, like beauties to each other,

When tête à tête their enmity they smother;

Kiss me, my dear—how do you?—Charming creature!

What shape! what bloom! what spirit in each feature!

You flatter me,—'pon honor, No.—You do—

My friend—my dear—sincerely yours—adieu!

But

EPILOGUE.

*But when at Routs, the dear friends change their tone—
I speak of foreign ladies, not our own.
Will you permit, good Sirs, these gloomy folk,
To give all tragedy, without one joke?
They gravely tell us—tragedy's design'd,
To purge the passions, purify the mind;
To which I say, to strike those blockheads dumb,
With physick, always give a sugar plumb;
I love these sugar plumbs in prose or rhimes;
No one is merrier than myself some times;
Yet I, poor I, with tears and constant moan,
Am melted down almost to skin and bone:
This night, in sighs and sobs I drew my breath;
Love, marriage, treason, prison, poison, death,
Were scarce sufficient to compleat my fate;
Two children were thrown in to make up weight.
With all these suff'rings, is it not provoking,
To be deny'd at last a little joking?
If they will make new laws, for mirth's sake—break 'em,
Roar out for Epilogues, and let me speak 'em.*

